



Blackbird Childcare Center/Harborage Handbook **(231) 526-4602 or (231) 526-4507**

Welcome to Blackbird Childcare Center/Harborage. We are excited to have your child enrolled in our program. Our center will focus on creative play, basic learning and socialization skills. Our goal is to provide a safe and quality program for the community of Harbor Springs. It is important that parents read this handbook carefully to develop a common understanding of expectations and become oriented with the program requirements needed for your child to attend. We want your family to be happy and comfortable with our “at school” care.

Program Philosophy

We strive to provide an environment of trust, understanding, comfort and safety for the children in our care. We hope to instill a sense of personal responsibility, empathy toward others, a desire to learn, and an ability to keep busy while having fun with schoolmates in each child. We understand that each child develops individually and grow and learn best in a safe environment. Our goal is to provide opportunities to explore, create and communicate with other children and adults. Children are encouraged to attain independence as they become ready for it. We believe children learn best by doing and are offered regular opportunities to participate in art, music, language development and indoor and outdoor play.

Program Plan

Children are placed in each program based upon chronological age and developmental appropriateness. Staffing ratios for each room are set by the State of Michigan. All licensing guidelines are followed. Each room is equipped with developmentally suitable toys and equipment.

Lambs – 6 weeks to 18 months

Yearlings- 18 months to 30 months

Little Rams- 30 months to 3/4 years

Rams-3-7 years old. **MUST BE COMPLETELY POTTY TRAINED** (i.e. totally independent in the bathroom)

Harborage- 2nd grade and up.

Each classroom requires different items. These items will be listed in the classroom Welcome Letter. Daily schedules are posted in each room.

Children will transition to a new classroom when the staff assesses that the child is ready to move to the next room. Parents will be informed that the child is ready for transition and must agree to such. Once agreed, the transition will commence. Any issues or concerns that arise will be shared with the parents during the process. Our goal is to have children in the program that suits their age, abilities and provides the best environment for that child.

Blackbird hours of operation are from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Harborage hours of operation are 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the school year and 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. in the summer.

Our daily classroom routine includes the following:

- Daily outside play
Please send appropriate outerwear.
- Group story and music time
- Quiet rest time
- Small group activities
- Group games and free play

Children must hang up their outerwear and backpacks upon arrival. Parents are required to frequently check their purple family folders for newsletters, billing statements and important classroom information. At the door of each room, you will find message tags to where we would be if not in our room. Please remember to check that location if we are not in the classroom.

Lambs Daily Schedule **(6 weeks-18 months)**

Lambs schedule is a rough estimate as the schedule for their care and activities are based upon their individual needs.

7:30-8:30: Welcome, free play and diapers
8:30-9:00: Morning snack
9:00-9:30: Diaper changes
10:30-11:00: Large motor play
11:00-11:30: Lunch
11:30-12:00: Diaper changing and quiet play
12:00-2:30: Nap Time
2:30-3:00: Quiet play and diaper changes
3:00-3:30: Snack time
3:30-6:00: Free play and diaper changes

Yearlings Daily Schedule **(18-30 months)**

7:30-9:00: Greeting/art
9:00-9:30: Snack
9:30-10:00: Free play/diapers
10:00-10:30: Motor play/walk
10:30-11:00: Outdoor activity
11:00-11:15: Carpet time
11:15-11:45: Lunch
11:45-12:15: Carpet time/diapers
12:15-12:30: Relaxation time
12:30-3:00: Nap time
3:00-3:30: Snack
3:30-4:00: Free play/diapers
4:00-6:00: Activity/free play

Little Rams Daily Schedule **(30 months-potty trained)**

Little Rams follow a potty schedule but also go as needed.

7:30-8:45: Arrival/breakfast/free play
8:45-9:00: Snack
9:00-9:30: Diapers/potty
9:30-10:00: Art/sensory
10:00-11:00: Outside/gym
11:00-11:15: Story/music
11:15-11:45: Lunch
11:45/12:15: Diapers/potty
12:15-2:30: Nap
2:30-3:00: Diapers/potty
3:00-3:30: Snack
3:30-4:00: Free play
4:00-6:00: Free play/outside/gym

Rams Daily Schedule **(potty trained 3 years and older)**

7:30-9:00: Welcome/open centers/free play
9:00-9:30: Snack
9:30-10:15: Outside/gym time
10:15-11:00: Circle time/story/craft
11:00-11:45: Lunch
11:45-12:15: Group time/story/dancing
12:15-1:30: Outside time
1:30-3:00: Nap/rest time
3:00-3:30: Snack
3:30-4:00: Free play
4:00-6:00: Activity/gym/outside

Fees and Scheduling

A non-refundable fall registration fee of \$75 is required. Once accepted into the program, this fee will be applied toward your child's tuition. The infant and toddler program is charged a daily rate. Half days (4 hours or less) is \$34. The daily rate is \$51. You will be billed the daily rate if your child is signed up for a half day and is in attendance longer than 4 hours. The hourly fee for potty trained 3 year olds and older is \$5.00/hour with a minimum of 5 hours per day. Drop-in rates are \$5.50/hour regardless of the child's age. We offer a 5% sibling discount off of the hourly/daily rate if you have two or more children enrolled in our programs. **Payment is required for contracted times even if your child is sick, cancels or does not show up.** We accept cash, check or you may pay via "eFunds for Schools" online with your bank account information or credit card. We do not offer sick or vacations days. If the center is closed for any reason, you will not be charged. Additional fees may be required for field trips. Rates are subject to change and parents will be notified if this should occur. Scholarships are available. *Please see the current Client Contract for a complete description of charges and payment agreement*

Clients will find their invoices for the week of services in their family folders on Mondays. Each client agrees to pay the invoice balance by 6:00 pm that Friday to avoid delinquency charges. There is a \$1.00 per business day late fee for balances not paid by Friday. There is a \$25 fee for returned checks.

DHS

Once all the paper work is filed and we receive all required information, your account and payment plan will then be set up. Billing slips will be put in your family file folders and you are responsible for paying your weekly payment and/or the remaining balance that DHS does not pay.

Delinquent Accounts

Delinquency charges will be posted to all delinquent accounts each day at 6:00 pm. An account is delinquent when payment in accordance with the contract has not occurred. A delinquency charge of \$1.00/business day applies to the account for the duration of the delinquency. *If after two weeks the account is still delinquent, childcare will be terminated until the account has been paid in full.*

Drop-In

"Drop-In" services are available to children who are not enrolled in our program only if space is available. Payment is due at the time of sign-up. Payment is still required even if your child cancels, is sick, or does not show up. A charge of \$5.00/hour will be applied for the time your child is in childcare.

Late Pick Up

Parents who pick up their child after 6:00 p.m. (according to the classroom clock) must pay a \$10.00 fee per child. This fee must be paid before your child can return to the childcare center.

Scheduling

Each client is required to fill out a Client Contract. Clients must complete the contract before the start of childcare. The contract is binding for the duration of the school year when signed by both parties. **There are no credits for cancellations, sick days, vacations or no shows.** You may add days by checking with the center to ensure space is available for your child. The additional cost will be included on the next week's billing statement.

Enrollment Policies

A child may be signed up through Blackbird Childcare Center/Harborage only upon receipt of an Enrollment Request Form. At that time, the center will start enrollment procedures. In the event of a waiting list, the center will keep this form on file and use it to contact you when a space for your child becomes available. **No child will be accepted without current immunizations.** Hepatitis B vaccination is required of all childcare attendees as of 1/97. Varicella (chicken pox) vaccination is required of all childcare attendees as of 1/00. In the event that your child has had chicken pox, please provide us with a note from your physician stating the month and year of infection. All enrollments are contingent upon a seven day "get acquainted period". At the end of this period, Blackbird Childcare Center/Harborage reserves the right to discontinue care if we feel the arrangement is not positive for everyone. It is of the utmost importance that all of the children fit together as a group.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available to assist with the cost of child care for both Blackbird Child Care Center and The Harborage. All applications are handled in a confidential manner. We encourage our families to reach out if in need. Our goal is to provide high quality child care to as many families as possible. Scholarship application is attached at the end of this document.

Food Service Policy

Snacks/Lunch

Blackbird Childcare Center does not provide food, snacks or beverages. Please send a daily lunch along with morning and afternoon snacks. All bottles, sippy cups and containers must be labeled daily with your child's first and last name and date. Hot lunch is available through the Harbor Springs Public Schools food service program during the school year. Milk is also available to purchase on it's own. Additional fees for the food service are applicable and vary. State licensing requires that we only serve white milk from the cafeteria. We cannot provide chocolate milk. You must still provide a morning and afternoon snack if you choose to purchase from the food service program. BBCCC will not manage school lunch accounts. Client agrees to pay any hot lunch charges that occur if their child arrives at the childcare center without a lunch. No child will be deprived of a meal or snack. All meals served from the cafeteria meet the minimum meal requirements of the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Blackbird Childcare Center will ensure children with special dietary needs receive meals in accordance with the child's needs.

-Breakfast is available from the food service program from 7:40 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

-Lunch from the food service program is available from 11:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

-No meals are served from the food service program when school is not in session.

Menus are posted with all optional food substitutions in each classroom and copies are available for families to take home.

If you are providing your child with a lunch, a written food service agreement is required stating that you are choosing to provide your child with meals and snacks from home. Healthy choices and nutritious meals and snacks are strongly encouraged. We are happy to provide parents with a list of healthy lunch and snack suggestions upon request.

A refrigerator and microwave are located in each room for your convenience. Lunch schedules are located in each room.

Breastfeeding/Bottle Feeding

Breastfeeding is supported by accepting, storing and serving breast milk in ready to feed sanitary containers. It must be labeled with the child's name and date. It will be stored no longer than 48 hours (or 24 hours if previously frozen). Comfortable places are provided if you choose to come in to feed your child.

Formula milk must come prepared and in clearly labeled bottles. Staff will discard any unconsumed milk after the feeding and return the bottle home. If the milk has been warmed, it will be discarded after 5 minutes.

No solid food or juice will be given to infants younger than 6 months (unless documented by a health care provider).

Cow's milk is not fed to infants younger than 12 months. ONLY whole milk is used for children aged 12-24 months. 2% milk may be used after 24 months.

Meals and snacks are at least 2 hours apart but not more than 3 hours apart. Full-fat milk products are encouraged for healthy early brain development.

Plan for accidents, injuries, incidents and illness

Accidents/Injuries/Incidents

If your child should become injured while in attendance at the center, a written notification will be given to you regardless of the degree of injury. You will be required to sign this report acknowledging that you are aware the incident occurred. Serious injuries/situations (head injury, broken limb, excessive bleeding, injuries requiring medical attention, allergic reactions, seizure, incidents involving lost child, etc.) will be reported to you at the time of the incident with a phone call from the lead teacher, assistant director or director. If you cannot be reached via phone, your emergency contacts will be called. Minor injuries will be reported to you via email or text message and also when you arrive to pick up your child.

Infectious Illness

Once a child's illness is diagnosed by a licensed physician as infectious, parents are asked to report this diagnosis to the center so that all other parents can be notified. Your child's name will not be mentioned. If your child is taking an antibiotic due to illness, you may not bring the child to the center until they have been on the antibiotic for at least 24 hours.

Child Illness and exclusion policy

Parents or other authorized guardians will be notified when their child has a symptom that requires exclusion from the center. A quiet area will be provided for a child who appears to be sick or injured. You, or your emergency contact, will be required to pick up your child immediately upon notification of your child's condition. Reasons for exclusion are described below.

Fever:

A child with a fever of 100° F or more is to be sent home. She/he may return when fever-free (less than 100° F) for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

Vomiting:

If a child is acting ill and has vomited 1-2 times, she/he is to be sent home. The child may return if there has been no vomiting for 24 hours and she/he is tolerating bland foods.

Diarrhea:

A child having uncontrolled diarrhea will be sent home. The child may return to the center when normal stools are present for 24 hours. An increase in number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern

1. Increase stool water; or
2. Decrease form that is not contained by the diaper or use of toilet

Mouth Sores:

A child who has mouth sores and is drooling will be excluded from day care. She/he may be readmitted when sores are scabbed and healed or health care provider determines they are non-infectious.

Eye Infection:

Parents will be notified if child has signs and symptoms of conjunctivitis/pink eye. The child will be sent home with recommendations to see a physician. She/he may return after 24 hours of antibiotic therapy or sooner if we receive a written statement from the physician that your child does not have a communicable disease.

Ear Infection:

If a child exhibits symptoms of an ear infection and is acting ill, parents will be notified so that they can take the child to a physician. The child may return after initiation of antibiotic therapy or if cleared by a physician. Your child must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.

Strep Throat:

A child with fever and/or strep throat will be excluded from day care. She/he may return after 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and if fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medication.

Chicken Pox:

A child will be sent home when chicken pox lesions are detected. She/he may return when all chicken pox lesions have dried and crusted. Parents will be notified when a case of chicken pox occurs.

RSV:

Infants under the age of 2 with RSV should be excluded a minimum of 5 days following diagnosis. Children must be feeling well and fever free for 24 hours with minimal coughing before returning to daycare. Due to the fact that RSV is highly contagious, our center reserves the right to request parents to have RSV testing on any child with symptoms of RSV. If testing is declined, the child may be sent home until he/she is free of symptoms.

Head Lice:

Child cannot return until they are completely lice and nit free.

Skin Outbreak:

If a child develops a rash, (this includes ringworm, impetigo, hives, severe diaper rash, or any other undiagnosed rash), parents will be notified to remove the child from day care and see a physician. The child may return after 24 hours of medication or written clearance from a physician that states that the child does not have a communicable disease.

Other Illnesses or Conditions

A child will be excluded from the center if she/he has an illness or condition that

- prevents the child from participating comfortably in center activities and/or
- results in greater care needs than the child care staff can provide, without compromising the health and safety of other children.

The child may return to the center when the symptoms or conditions causing exclusion have subsided.

A child that is too sick to go outdoors is considered too sick to be at the center. We will expect all children in attendance to go outdoors if the class is going outdoors. There will be no exceptions.

Often times a physician will state that the child can return to group care contrary to our exclusion policies. In such cases, a written statement signed by the physician is required upon the child's return to the center. However, our center reserves the right to still exclude the child from care. A written doctor's statement will **NEVER** override the center's 24 hour, fever free, exclusion policy.

Medication

State regulations do not allow us to give your child medication unless we have a written statement from you. Medicine must be in its original container bearing the child's name and that of the physician. Medication should be administered at home whenever possible. Over the counter medications, such as Tylenol, may be given with permission to comfort a child, but cannot be used to mask symptoms. Over the counter medications will only be administered if an accurate dosage for the age of your child is found on the label or guidelines are provided in writing from a physician's office. All medication administered at the center must be recorded on the medication log regardless of who is giving the medication. All medication must be given to a staff member by the parent when on school property. A child is at no time allowed to carry or store medication of any kind in a backpack.

Please call our center if your child is ill or will not be attending.

Discipline

Discipline techniques vary by age and room.

-Infants (6 weeks -18 months) are too young to be disciplined. Infant staff members will work to provide a stable, predictable environment which helps to prevent undesirable behavior.

-Discipline for toddlers (18 months to 3 years) involves avoiding negative attention and offering other choices. Being consistent and reinforcing positive behavior are also used with toddlers. Time outs are deemed inappropriate for children under the age of 3 and will not be used by staff.

-Discipline for older children (3 and up) begins with a positive talk with the child followed by a change of activity. Taking a break is used as a time for the child to think about their behavior and actions. The child and teacher will then discuss the child's behavior and they may return to their activity. This puts the child in control of their own behavior. Behavior will be documented in a behavioral report that must be signed by a parent or guardian. After 3 behavior alerts are issued, parents will be called to schedule a meeting to discuss their child's behavior. Withdrawal procedures will commence if a child is consistently mean, uncontrollable or disruptive.

Blackbird Childcare Center does not permit spanking, hitting, pinching or other forms of corporal punishment. Other types of discipline not permitted include humiliating, shaming, threatening, depriving a child of meal, snacks or toilet use. No staff member shall put vinegar, hot sauce or soap in a child's mouth as a form of punishment.

We will talk to parents if the need presents itself. We are here to encourage positive behavior. Open communication between parents and caregivers is important. We do our best to inform parents of their child's behavior daily. Please work with your child at home regarding appropriate behavior at the center.

Other policies and procedures

Special Needs

As a matter of policy, our center does not discriminate against children with disabilities or special needs. If a child requires care that affect our classroom ratios, the family is required to bear the cost of all additional care.

Emergency Policies and Procedures

Emergency procedures are posted in each classroom. Fire, tornado, lock down and shelter in place drills are done on a regular basis. A log of all drills is kept on file.

If an actual emergency were to occur, parents would be notified of all actions taken by our staff via phone. not discriminate against children with disabilities or special needs. If a child requires care that affects our classroom

Napping

Each Blackbird child who attends the center at rest time will be provided a mat and be expected to rest each day. Please provide your child with a pillow and blanket if it is needed. Children need an appropriate bag to store their naptime belongings in. The center is not responsible for any lost articles. Napping items need to be kept in the bag and parents are responsible for washing the items on a weekly basis

Clothing/Diapers

We ask that children be dressed in washable play clothes so they may participate in all activities. In the summer, children should bring in their own sunscreen, swimsuit and beach towel. Sandals with straps must be worn...no flip-flops. In the winter, warm outerwear will be needed. Boots, snow pants, jackets, mittens and hats are required. This is the school policy. Without proper attire, the child will spend their recess standing on the sidewalk and not be able to participate in playtime. **Please label all of your child's belongings.**

Children should keep at least one complete change of clothing at the school or in their backpack in case their clothes become soiled. The center will send soiled clothing home to be laundered. All extra clothing should be labeled with the child's name.

Client must provide diapers and wipes for their child.

Personal Items and Toys

We strongly discourage children from bringing personal toys to the childcare center. We are not responsible for lost or broken toys. We do allow special days for "show and tell". If items are brought from home on "show and tell" days, your child must share with all other children or the child will be asked to put the item away.

Field Trips

We plan several field trips throughout the school year and summer months. Parents will be notified in advance of all outings that we plan. Every child must have a release form signed by a parent or guardian to attend. A Harbor Springs school bus will be used to transport children when walking is not practical.

Withdrawal

If it becomes necessary that you withdraw your child, all childcare fees must be paid in accordance with your current contract. Blackbird Childcare Center/Harborage reserves the right to have a child withdrawn from the program if behavior prohibits them or other children from benefiting from the program or for nonpayment of tuition fees.

Holidays/Breaks

Although we are located in the school building and are operated by the school system, we do not necessarily follow the school calendar. We will be open on all inservice days and half-days of school if enrollment requirements are met. We will be closed on the following days:

Labor Day Break

Thanksgiving Break

Christmas Break

Spring Break – dates will be posted

Memorial Day

Fourth of July

Friday and Monday before school starts

Snow days

Licensing Notebook

Blackbird Childcare Center strives to offer a quality program for families. We maintain a licensing notebook that is available for parents to review during our regular business hours. The notebook contains all licensing inspections as well as any special investigation reports and related corrective action plans. These reports from the prior three years are also available on the childcare licensing website (www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

The following paperwork must be on file **before** a child may attend Blackbird Childcare Center/Harborage:

- Emergency Card
- Immunization Record/School Age Health Statement
- Parent Contract
- Updated Physical Form (if applicable)
- Food Policy Agreement
- Walking Field Trip Permission Slip
- Transportation Agreement
- Topical/Non-prescription Medication Agreement

We hold an OPEN DOOR policy to encourage visits by parents whenever possible. We feel that open discussion between parents and staff is vital. Please come to us if you have any concerns and we will work with you to alleviate problems as they may arise.

Mr. Michael Behrmann
Harbor Springs Public Schools Superintendent

Tami Wilkins
Blackbird Childcare/Harborage Director

(Cut and return lower portion after you have read and understand all policies listed in this handbook.)

I have read the Blackbird Childcare Center/Harborage Handbook, understand the content, and agree to abide by all policies stated therein. The Blackbird Childcare Center/Harborage’s days/hours of operation, policies, and rates may be subject to change at the beginning of each session.

Child’s Name

Parent’s Signature

Date



Harbor Springs
Public Schools

Blackbird/Harborage Child Care Center Scholarship Application

Scholarship Application for (circle one): Blackbird The Harborage

Today's Date _____

Child's Name _____ DOB _____

Name(s) of Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

_____ address _____

_____ address _____

Phone Number(s) _____

Annual Household Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Income: \$ _____

Number of People Living in Household _____

Parent/Guardian 1 Employer _____

of Hours Worked _____

Parent/Guardian 2 Employer _____

of Hours Worked _____

Please indicate if you are in receipt of other child-related financial support and amount:

- Child Support \$ _____
- FIA Support \$ _____
- Other? \$ _____ (Source _____)

Have you applied for and received denial for DHS funding for child care? (please attached letter of denial)

Please attach tax returns of other evidence in support of income for all household caregivers and complete state of need on reverse side.

Statement of Need

Please summarize your reasons for applying for a scholarship, include any details about your family and/or financial circumstances that you would like us to consider; use additional sheets if necessary.

Do you consider this request to be long-term or short-term? (please explain)

Please note that all information is treated with strict confidentiality. If granted a scholarship, all portions of the paid portion of the child care bill must be current in order to continue to receive the scholarship

Office Use

Amount Granted _____

Date _____

Notes:

Approval Signature _____